

To: Chairperson and Authority Members **Date:** August 9, 2002
From: Mehdi Morshed, Executive Director
Subject: **Agenda Item 5 — Sacramento – Bakersfield Alignments Update**

Discussion

Staff will describe the high-speed train alignments for further evaluation between Sacramento and Bakersfield, and give an update of the engineering work underway in the region. The alignments and station locations for further evaluation are as follows:

SACRAMENTO-TO-STOCKTON

Alignments:

- *Union Pacific (UP):* This potential alignment extends east from the Rail Depot to an embankment going south near California State University Sacramento. North of Lodi the alignment will diverge from the UP to the CCT that will bypass Lodi and will reconnect to the UP to serve the proposed downtown Stockton station site.
- *Central California Traction (CCT)/SP:* This potential alignment extends southeast from the proposed Power Inn Road station location.

Station Locations:

- *Sacramento Rail Depot* - Located at the existing Amtrak station, this potential station site connects to other modes most effectively and is closest to government and downtown business destinations.
- *Power Inn Road* - Located on Power Inn Road, south of the US 50 Freeway and north of Fruitridge Road, this potential station location is located in a predominately industrial area

STOCKTON –TO-MODESTO

Alignments:

- *“Express Loop”/Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF)* - This potential alignment allows for high-speed through service while providing service to the proposed Downtown ACE station. Both the stopping and through tracks diverge from the UP/CCT north of Stockton and will converge with the BNSF alignment southeast of Stockton.
- *“Express Loop”/UP* - This potential alignment allows for high-speed through service while providing service to the proposed Downtown ACE station. The stopping track will continue on the UP alignment to the proposed station site and the through tracks will diverge from the UP/CCT north of Stockton and will converge back with the UP south of Stockton.

Station Locations:

- *Downtown ACE* - This potential station site is the former Southern Pacific depot and the current terminal of the Altamont Railway Express (ACE) commuter service to San Jose. Because of the tight curves on the existing rail line through downtown Stockton that would severely limit maximum speeds, an express track outside of the urban area would have to be developed in order to provide high-speed service.

Agenda Item 5 – Sacramento-Bakersfield Alignments Update

Page 2 of 3

August 9, 2002

MODESTO-TO-MERCED

Alignments:

- BNSF - This potential alignment is adjacent to the BNSF extending south from the proposed Modesto Amtrak – Briggsmore station location to Merced.
- UP - This potential alignment is adjacent to the UP extending south from the proposed downtown Stockton station location to Merced.

Station Locations:

- Modesto Downtown - This potential station site is the former SP rail station and currently the Modesto Transportation Center.
- Modesto Amtrak - Briggsmore - This potential station site is located at the existing Amtrak Station on Held Drive north of Briggsmore Avenue on the BNSF alignment.

MERCED-TO-FRESNO

Alignments:

- UP - This potential alignment extends south from Merced to a Fresno station location.
- BNSF - This potential alignment extends south from Merced to a Fresno station location.

Station Locations:

- Merced Downtown - This potential station site is on the UP alignment and lies near the city center and is the transit hub of Merced on the UP route.
- Castle Air force Base - This potential station site is located at the decommissioned Air Force Base close to the BNSF alignment coming from Modesto.
- Merced Municipal Airport - This potential station site is located on the grounds of the existing MCE airport complex southwest of SR 99.

FRESNO-TO-TULARE

Alignments:

- UP - This potential alignment is the continuation of the UP alignment from Merced and extends southeast from the proposed Fresno downtown station to the proposed Visalia station site.
- BNSF - This potential alignment extends south from Fresno to a Hanford station site. Currently the BNSF alignment in Fresno runs through residential areas on a narrow single-track right-of-way, crossing many local streets, which would require extensive grade separations, raising costs and visual impacts. However as part of the rail consolidation plan being proposed by the Fresno Council of Governments the BNSF line would be relocated into the UP alignment at a point north of Fresno and would diverge with the UP south of Fresno. Working on the assumption that the rail consolidation plan is implemented this alignment offers the highest connectivity and accessibility offering the most direct service from the proposed downtown Fresno station to Hanford. However if the rail consolidation plan were not implemented the alignment to the north of Fresno would be diverted from the BNSF to the UP alignment to connect with the proposed downtown Fresno station location and will converge with the BNSF south of Fresno.

Station Locations:

- Fresno Downtown - This potential station site is located within the UP right-of-way in downtown Fresno that is the site of the current rail consolidation study being conducted.

Agenda Item 6 – Sacramento-Bakersfield Alignments Update

Page 3 of 3

August 9, 2002

TULARE-TO-BAKERSFIELD

Alignments:

- UP - This potential alignment extends south from the proposed Visalia Airport station location to Bakersfield.
- BNSF - This potential alignment extends south from the proposed downtown Hanford station site to Bakersfield.
- UP/BNSF - This potential alignment extends south from the proposed Visalia Airport station location to just north of Bakersfield where the UP veers the southeast the alignment will continue south on a new rail alignment where it will converge with the BNSF into Bakersfield.

Station Locations:

- Visalia Airport - This potential station site is located along the UP route near the junction of SR 99 and SR 198 at the Visalia Airport thus maximizing connectivity as well as the maximizing the ridership and revenue potential while minimizing environmental impacts.
- Hanford - This potential station site is located along the BNSF alignment in the vicinity of the existing Amtrak station in Hanford.

BAKERSFIELD-TO-LA CONNECTORS

Alignments:

- Bakersfield Station to I5 Connector - This alignment extends east along UP from a Bakersfield station location, south along State Route 184 (SR184)/Wheeler Ridge Road, and generally follows the I-5 to the base of the Tehachapi Mountains where it connects with the Bakersfield-to-Los Angeles corridor.
- Bakersfield Station to SR-58 Connector - This alignment extends from a Bakersfield station location along SR-58 east from Bakersfield where it connects with the Bakersfield-to-Los Angeles corridor.

Station Locations:

- Truxton - This potential downtown station site is located just east of the new Amtrak station in downtown Bakersfield near Truxton Avenue and R Street.
- Golden State - This potential downtown station site is located along the existing UP route that parallels Golden State Avenue in the northern part of downtown Bakersfield.
- Bakersfield Airport - This potential station site is located along the existing on the UP route just west of SR 99 and south of 7th Standard Road, which is planned for freeway expansion.